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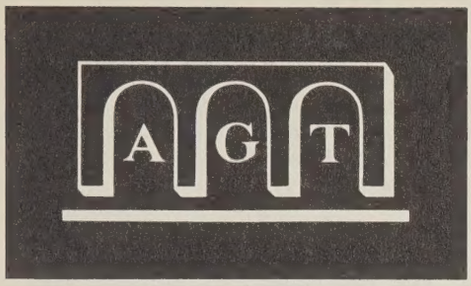
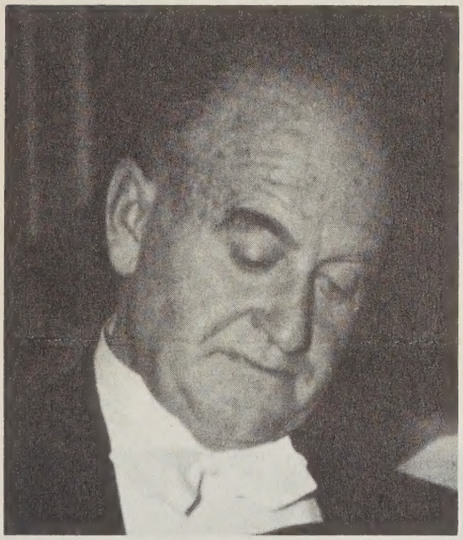
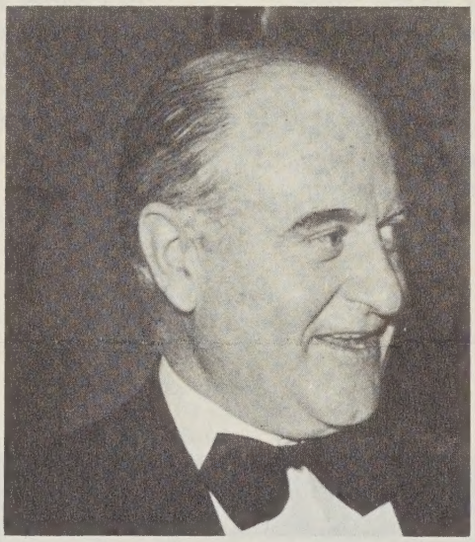
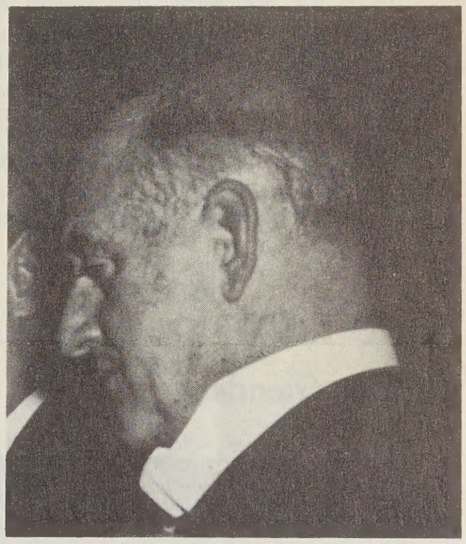


NEWS AND NOTES

THE ART GALLERY OF TORONTO







I Collect What I Like

In New York City, in 1914, a young executive began a collection of works of art, initially by American artists, that has to-day become one of the best known group of Canadian paintings in private hands.

Charles Band did not inherit his collection : he made it.

He started, some forty-five years ago, collecting posters – he still has two large trunks of them in his attic. To-day, he collects paintings and drawings by Canadian artists.

Born in Thorold, Ontario, the young Charles Band, son of a prominent miller, did not waste time. After Upper Canada College and early business years in Toronto, he was soon off across the border, where he first built up a group of works by such leading U.S. masters as Winslow Homer, Childe Hassam and etchings by Frank Benson.

About this time, Charles Band saw much of the young Helen Warren, who was to become his wife and sympathetic partner to his artistic development. Daughter of the great Toronto collector, Mrs. H. D. Warren, she was brought up in an atmosphere of fine things and intellectual pursuits. Together, they began their enthusiastic collecting of Canadian art, artists and people.

Following his own advice, Mr. Band has made a practice of getting to know most of the artists who painted the works in his collection; not only is he their patron, but friend, critic and student as well. He grew to know both the painters and their subjects as he fished with them, picnicked with them and watched them work from his island home in the Georgian Bay where many of them were invited to spend part of the summer. He always wants to find the sincerity and integrity he seeks, in the work as well as the man. "At first", he admits "I did not like the new Canadian painting, but during the thirties, I became keenly aware of Canadian art." "Slowly, very slowly, my interest was caught by a group of rebellious young men, later to win fame as the Group of Seven".

Through his former schoolmate Lawren Harris, he was introduced to Fred Varley, A. Y. Jackson and Arthur Lismer in their early days. "The Group of Seven were always very patient with me" he recalls. "They invited me over to the Studio Building in Rosedale, but they never pressured me". His son, John Band, remembers one particular Sunday, cold and bleak as could be, when "we, as kids, spent hours and hours there, while father went over sketch after sketch". He also well remembers the first thing his father bought from the Studio, Lawren Harris' *Arctic Sketches*. "They were awfully cold in that dining room on a winter's night", he said. The Studio Building, where members of the Group of Seven expounded their ideas of creating a truly Canadian style and painted the Canadian scene, is still a centre of artistic endeavour to-day. Mr. and Mrs. Band's collection of Varley's work is one of the most comprehensive in the world including, as it does, every facet of the artist's work from major oils to his beautiful sensitive drawings.

Charles Band was also one of the first to appreciate the genius of Emily Carr. "It was the Canadian content of her work which first attracted me – totem poles, and Indian churches in the forest". He said, "Her paintings breathe of the outdoors". He visited her several times in her studio in Victoria and came to appreciate her as a great person as well as a great artist. His ten Emily Carr paintings include the famous *Indian Church*.

Having begun his Canadian collection with the Group of Seven, Mr. Band might have continued to buy only this School, but, being a rare collector, he has kept up with new painters whose work is as 'avant-garde' as were the Group of Seven in their day. He was one of the first private collectors to buy works by Borduas, Jock Macdonald and Riopelle. "If you continue to buy in only one style and period" he says, "as a collector, you are dead". Think of artists as reporters". Although he admits he finds it difficult to understand some of the titles of contemporary paintings, he feels that abstract expressionism is a matter of one's personal feelings and perhaps it would be simpler if the title under every painting read: "To whom it may concern".

This, then – this gentle man of humour, of joie de vivre and enthusiasm – was the man who, in 1945, became president of The Art Gallery of Toronto. He carried us through three active years of exhibitions, openings, meetings and all the whirligig activities that go on at Grange House seven days a week. He has been, friend, benefactor, advisor, harsh critic yet generous in his praise. But 1948 was not 'goodbye' to Mr. Band. He keeps popping in. His continuing service, not only to The Art Gallery of Toronto, but also to Canadian art is invaluable. He makes generous loans of his collection to exhibitions in many foreign countries as well as in Canada itself.

To Charles Band, who has himself in his collecting exactly followed the manifesto of Borduas "who had the courage to stick to his ideals against the public taste of his time", we pay tribute.

"Buy for enjoyment: never for profit".

The collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. Band may be seen at The Art Gallery of Toronto, February 16 – March 24, 1963.

Here he is

with his friends . . .

The Art Gallery of Toronto

December 31st, 1962

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Eaton, Lady
Eaton, Mrs. R. Y.

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Fox, E. C.
Fudger, Miss Hannah

Gelber, Marvin B.
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Jackman, Henry R.

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Morrow, Mrs. Graham
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Tovell, Vincent

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Wilson, Mrs. John Alexander

Zacks, Samuel
Zacks, Mrs. Samuel

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Eaton, Mrs. Timothy

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Flavelle, Lady
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Gundy, J. H.

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Leonard, Mrs. R. W.

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Massey, Estate of H. A.
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Pellatt, Sir Henry

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Crang, J. Harold

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Hermant, Sydney
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Hodgson, J. E.
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Ryrie, Jack

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Stewart, The Honourable
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Stewart, Roy A.
Stoker, Patrick McG.
Stone, Edgar J.
Stone, Mrs. Edgar J.
Strathy, G. B.
Streight, Dr. S. J.
Sweeny, William R.
Switzer, T. D.
Symons, Mrs. H. L.
Symons, Mrs. Scott

Taft, J. W.
Tanenbaum, Max
Tate, H. W.
Taylor, Mrs. E. P.
Taylor, J. Blyth
Thomson, Garth O.
Thomson, Mrs. Leslie R.
Thompson, Mrs. Philip
Torno, Noah
Torno, Philip
Trelford, Dr. W. G.
Trevett, William Edward
Trevor, L. J.
Tudhope, H. R.
Tyas, Philip E.

Van Allan, Miss Marjorie

Waldie, Mrs. R. S.
Waldie, R. S.
Walker, Alfred A.
Walker, E. H.
Walker, Dr. E. M.
Walker, Harold
Wallace, Brigadier F. C.
Walls, F. B.
Warren, F. A.
Warren, Harold D.
Warwick, Miss Mildred
Warwick, Miss Norah
Warwick, Miss Orian
Watkins, William B.
Watson, Colin G.
Watson, W. G.
Webster, George Richard
West, H. T.
Weston, J. F.
Whealy, Mrs. J. A.
White, J. R.
Whittaker, Herbert
Wilder, Mrs. William P.
Wilkes, Hilton
Williams, Ernest S.
Williams, William E.
Wills, J. C.
Wilson, A. E.
Wilson, Mrs. A. R.
Wilson, Mrs. H. H.
Wilson, Ross F.
Wilson, W. K.
Withers, Miss Margaret E.
Wood, C. F.
Wood, L. M.
Wood, The Honourable Mrs. Robert
Woods, David
Woods, P. L.
Wotherspoon, Gordon D. S.
Wright, Mrs. Mabel
Wright, Mrs. Walter
Wyatt, H. J.

Yeomans, Donald R.
Yolles, L. S.
Young, N. D.

On duty . . .

With the great . . .

Distinguished Visitors

Each year the staff of the Gallery is in the fortunate position of playing host to a number of important visitors. Aside from special lecturers who come to speak on "Wednesday Nights", such as Mr. Peter Selz, Curator of the Department of Painting and Sculpture Exhibitions, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Mr. Thomas Messer, Director of the Guggenheim Museum, New York, the Art Gallery of Toronto has so far this year been honoured by the visits of several distinguished men.

In late August, Mr. Daniel Robbins, Assistant Curator of the Guggenheim came to examine the painting in our collection by Albert Gleizes, *Le Port,* in connection with a study he is making of this artist. In September, Professor K. Bauch of the University of Freiburg, Germany, who is working upon a *catalogue raisonné* of Rembrandt's work, studied the two Rembrandts in our collection: the *Portrait of a Lady with a Lap Dog* and the *Portrait of a Lady with a Handkerchief.* About the time our exhibition of Cobra painting closed in October, Mr. Holger H. Hansen visited us from the Silkeborg Museum in Denmark; the most generous patron of this museum is one of the Cobra painters whose works we exhibited — Asgar Jorn.

The director of the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Dr. W. J. H. D. Sandberg, after opening the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts' exhibition of *Contemporary Dutch Painting* in October, came on to Toronto in order to see the work of the younger painters in this city. Although his visit was interrupted by a trip for a television programme in Seattle, where he had arranged the Contemporary European Art exhibition for the World's Fair, we had the opportunity to talk with him about contemporary artists in Holland and the possibilities for future exhibitions of their work here.

A long-time friend of the Art Gallery of Toronto, Mr. W. G. Constable, also visited us in October. Mr. Constable, who was once the Director of the Courtauld Institute of Art in London and has retired as Curator of Paintings from the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, was in Canada largely to open the exhibition of British paintings, for which he had written the catalogue, for the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University. We have invited him to act as an advisor on an exhibition which is as yet in the early stages of planning.

During these visits the Art Gallery's staff has had a chance to discuss with these men certain problems of mutual interest like museum management, collection and exhibition policies and questions of scholarship related to the visitors' particular fields of interest. Traditionally such visitors are invited to informal staff luncheons in the Gallery so that other members of the staff, beside department heads, may meet them and benefit from the informal discussions.

To emphasize the international nature of our visitors' list, a November guest was Professor Ton Man Su, a teacher at the Yan Wan Arts College in Hong Kong.

Finally, we were honoured recently by the visit of His Excellency Major-General Georges P. Vanier, the Governor-General of Canada, and Madame Vanier. His Excellency presented the Canadian Conference of the Arts 1962 Diploma of Honour to Dean W. A. Riddell of Regina College in the drawing room of Grange House on the afternoon of Tuesday, November 6.

Permanent Membership

At the last annual general meeting of The Art Gallery qualifications for the various forms of permanent membership were increased to the amounts indicated below:

Founders —Donations of $10,000 and upwards
Endowment
Benefactors—Donations of $3,000 and less than $10,000
Benefactors —Donations of $1,000 and less than $3,000
Life —Donations of $500 and less than $1,000

With the exception of 25% of that for Life membership all such cash donations provide funds for the purchase of works of art and it is through these donations that the largest portion of the Gallery's collection has been acquired.

As an educational institution the Gallery issues a receipt entitling the donor to an income tax deduction; donations made over a period of years are cumulative in raising the category of his or her membership.

With this issue of News and Notes a supplement is included recording the names of all permanent members to whose generosity through the years the Art Gallery owes so much.

WATTEAU — DELACROIX — CLAUDE

The Art Gallery has made three important additions to its European collection this autumn. One is the small oil sketch by Watteau, a *Frieze of Cupids* after Rubens' ceiling in the Banqueting Hall, Whitehall, London; it is not known whether he painted it when he visited London in 1720 or whether he worked from a drawing by Rubens which has since disappeared. When our painting was in the Cook collection at Richmond, it was catalogued as Rubens, but it is now accepted as Watteau by the two leading experts on his work, M. François Mathey and Sir Karl Parker. It is the only painting by Watteau in a public collection in Canada.

A second acquisition is Delacroix's *Fanatics of Tangier,* an important late work by this painter, dated 1857. Delacroix painted it from his memory of a group of religious fanatics he had seen in North Africa twenty-five years before. It was exhibited in the Delacroix exhibition here with the only other version of the subject painted twenty years earlier. Its impecable background is recorded by Mr. Lee Johnson in the catalogue to the exhibition.

The greatest acquisition of the year is a gift to the Art Gallery of Toronto by Group Captain H. L. Cooper, A.F.C., of Salisbury, England "in appreciation of the contribution of Canadians in the Armed Services in the two World Wars". *Carlo and Ubaldo Embarking in Pursuit of Rinaldo* is a painting by Claude which our director emeritus Mr. Martin Baldwin arranged to have exhibited in the *Héritage de France* exhibition. Claude recorded this painting in his famous notebook of compositions, the *Liber Veritatis,* which is now in the British Museum; he also added a note that he had painted it in Rome in 1667 for Signor Falconieri. Paolo Francesco Falconieri, the first owner was a Florentine nobleman and Roman prince and an important patron of Claude's. The history of the picture is fairly completely recorded from him to the donor, Group Captain Cooper, who inherited it from his wife, Lady Lucas. It is however the quality of the picture rather than its history that makes our gratitude to Group Captain Cooper so enormous.

ANTOINE WATTEAU
FRENCH, 1684-1721

FRIEZE OF CUPIDS

Oil on canvas on wood
8½ x 31½ inches
The Art Gallery of Toronto, 1962

Exhibition Catalogues Available in Advance

Gallery members may now obtain the catalogue for each major Gallery exhibition (Society exhibitions excepted) through the mail prior to the members' preview.

Many members have already taken advantage of this offer under which the Gallery commits itself to make available catalogues for at least four of its major exhibitions in any year. The individual selling price of the four issues this year totals substantially more than the $5.00 charged the member for these catalogues mailed in advance.

The next catalogue to be mailed to members under this offer is that for the exhibition of the Band Collection which opens to members February 15.

If you wish to avail yourself of this service or obtain further details concerning it, please telephone our Membership Secretary at 363-3485.

Contributors to this Issue of News and Notes

Dr. Jean S. Boggs, Curator; A. K. Kembar, Secretary-Treasurer; Mrs. Stewart Bagnani; Janine Smiter, Editor. We are grateful to Charles S. Band, and John T. Band for their co-operation on *I Collect What I Like.*